

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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-----190728Z 079919 /13

O 190606Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3335

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 3645

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CSCE, SHUM, PINT, US, RO
OLSUBJ: U.S.-ROMANIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
REF: STATE 104105

1. DURING SUBSTANTIVE CALL BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ARMITAGE MAY 18, DEPFONMIN GLIGA MADE LENGTHY PRESENTATION
WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS BEING DESIGNED TO EXPRESS
"INFORMALLY" ROMANIA REACTIONS TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED
WITH AMBASSADOR NICOLAE (REFTEL). STRESSING THE OPEN AND
SINCERE SPIRIT WHICH CHARACTERIZES THE U.S.-ROMANIAN RELATIONS
AND DEEP AND PERSONAL INTEREST OF PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU IN
MAINTAINING AND FURTHERING THESE RELATIONS, GLIGA NOTED
THAT THE GOR, HOWEVER, HAS RECENTLY OBSERVED A TENDENCY
TO ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE CERTAIN POINTS OF VIEW ON THE GOR
WHICH ROMANIA REGARDS AS INTERFERENCE IN ITS INTERNAL
AFFAIRS. THE SITUATIONS OF PAUL COMA,

IOSIF TON, AND VLAD GEORGESCU ARE FOLLOWED NOT ONLY
BY U.S. MASS MEDIA BUT ALSO BY U.S. OFFICIALS. GOMA
IS NOT UNDER ARREST; TON IS NOT UNDER ARREST BUT HAS
BEEN BLAMED BY HIS BAPTIST CO-RELIGIONISTS FOR
"UNPATRIOTIC ATTITUDES"; GERGESCU IS UNDER ARREST
AND CHARGED WITH ESPIONAGE.

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2. GLIGA STATED THAT HE COULD RECALL NO OCCASION IN
WHICH ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES QUESTIONED ARREST OF PERSONS
IN THE U.S. ON WHAT COULD BE CONSTRUED AS POLITICAL
GROUNDS. THEREFORE THE GOR IS SURPRISED WHEN SUCH
PROBLEMS ARISE IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND QUESTIONS
WHAT MOTIVATION LIES BEHIND SUCH AN INTEREST. INVOCATION
OF HELSINKI FINAL ACT HAS NO RELEVANCE IN SUCH A SITUATION

IN GOR VIEW.

3. TURNING TO THE ANTI-U.S. CAMPAIGN IN THE ROMANIAN PRESS, GLIGA REPEATED FORMIN'S PREVIOUS STATEMENT TO AMBASSADOR--THAT ROMANIAN MEDIA HAD INSULTED NEITHER U.S. PRESIDENT NOR AMERICAN PEOPLE BUT HAD ONLY REPRODUCED PRESS ARTICLES NOTING "VARIOUS ASPECTS" OF LIFE IN THE U.S. FURTHER, THERE ARE NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF U.S. PRESS ARTICLES WHICH CRITICIZE THE GOR IN UNFAIR AND UNOBJECTIVE TERMS. CONSEQUENTLY, FOR THE SAKE OF OUR GOOD MUTUAL RELATIONS, BOTH SIDES SHOULD AGREE TO REFRAIN FROM PUBLISHING ARTICLES CRITICAL OF THE OTHER.

4. GLIGA WAS PARTICULARLY INSISTENT ABOUT RFE BROADCASTS WHICH ALLEGEDLY PROVIDE A FORUM FOR "THE DECLARED ENEMIES OF ROMANIA", ATTACK THE GOR AND ITS POLICIES DIRECTLY, AND BROADCAST PERSONAL ATTACKS ON CEAUSESCU AND OTHER SENIOR ROMANIAN LEADERS. IN SHORT, RFE DOES NOT PRACTICE EVEN BASIC JOURNALISTIC ETHICS; GIVEN U.S. OFFICIAL SPONSORSHIP OF RFE THE RADIO CANNOT BUT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON U.S.-ROMANIAN RELATIONS NOR ARE ITS BROADCASTS IN ACCORD WITH GOR UNDERSTANDING OF U.S. POLICY STATEMENTS ON ROMANIA.

5. REFERRING TO THE ANNUAL RENEWAL OF MFN, GLIGA STATED GOR POSITION THAT MFN SHOULD NOT BE LINKED TO "MARGINAL ELEMENTS". IF ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS SHOULD BE PLACED ON MFN, "WE WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITHOUT IT AS WE HAVE LIVED
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WITHOUT IT BEFORE." THIS WOULD BE AN UNDESIRABLE OUTCOME, BUT ROMANIANS ARE A PROUD PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT AND WILL NOT ACCEPT PRESSURES OR TUTELAGE FROM ANY SOURCE. GLIGA ENDED HIS INITIAL PRESENTATION BY STRESSING AGAIN ROMANIA'S DESIRE FOR EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY THIS PLACES ON BOTH FOREIGN MINISTRIES.

6. ARMITAGE RESPONDED BY NOTING THAT PRIMARY REASON FOR HIS VISIT HERE WAS TO CLARIFY ANY QUESTIONS ON THE NIMETZ-NICOLAE CONVERSATION AND THE U.S. POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENERAL. U.S. DESIRE IS TO DISCUSS THIS QUESTION QUIETLY BUT CANDIDLY, THEREBY AVOIDING A PUBLIC ISSUE WHICH WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT TO HANDLE. ARMITAGE REVIEWED GREAT IMPROVEMENT IN U.S.-ROMANIAN RELATIONS IN RECENT YEARS WHICH HAS ALLOWED US TO ENGAGE IN FRANK DIALOGUE OVER MUTUAL PROBLEMS. HE THEN OUTLINED IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, PRESIDENT CARTER'S PERSONAL INTEREST, AND DEEP AND STRONG POPULAR SUPPORT AMONG AMERICANS FOR THIS POSITION. PRESIDENT HAS ALSO MADE CLEAR THAT IT IS NOT

OUR INTENTION TO IMPOSE OUR IDEAS ON OTHER COUNTRIES OR TO UNDERMINE OTHER GOVERNMENTS OR POLITICAL SYSTEMS. NEVERTHELESS, HUMAN RIGHTS IS A LEGITIMATE CONCERN OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN THIS SUBJECT, AND PARTICULARLY CREATION OF A CSCE COMMISSION, PROVIDES ROMANIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES WITH A SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY FOR CLOSE COMMUNICATION WITH CONGRESS TO EXPLORE BOTH POLICIES AND PRACTICAL POSSIBILITIES. IN THIS CONNECTION, AS SHOWN IN RAPID CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON EARTHQUAKE ASSISTANCE, CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDE TOWARD ROMANIA IS QUITE FAVORABLE, AND IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF OTHER ELEMENTS WERE TO CHANGE THIS.

7. REGARDING THE PERSONS MENTIONED BY GLIGA, WE ARE PLEASED TO LEARN BOTH GOMA AND TON ARE NOT UNDER ARREST. GEORGESCU IS WELL REGARDED IN PROFESSIONAL CIRCLES IN THE

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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U.S. AND HAS MANY FRIENDS WHO ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT HIM. WE HAVE NOTED THAT ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE IN RECENT MONTHS TO INTERNAL CRITICISM HAD BEEN DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT THAN THAT OF SOME OF ITS NEIGHBORS AND IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR PERCEPTION OF A FIRM AND CONFIDENT ROMANIAN LEADERSHIP. WE ARE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT PERHAPS THIS POLICY OF RESTRAINT AND CALM MIGHT BE CHANGING AND THEREFORE WE CHOSE TO EXPRESS OUR CONCERN QUIETLY THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. SHOULD ROMANIAN ACTION AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS BECOME PROMINENT SUBJECT OF PRESS ATTENTION PRESIDENT MIGHT HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SPEAK OUT CONCERNING IT.

8. CONCERNING THE ANTI-AMERICAN PRESS CAMPAIGN,

ARMITAGE STRESSED THAT IT IS NOT CRITICISM PER SE WHICH BOTHERS US BUT RATHER A CONCERN THAT THE GOR MIGHT HAVE TAKEN A DELIBERATE DECISION TO UNDERTAKE A CAMPAIGN WHICH RAISES A QUESTION CONCERNING OUR BASIC RELATIONSHIP. GLIGA'S OFFER TO CEASE ALL CRITICISM COULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BECAUSE OF OUR INABILITY TO CONTROL OR GUIDE U.S. PRESS. ON GPE ARMITAGE UNDERLINED AUTONOMOUS NATURE OF BIB AND FACT THAT BROADCASTS ARE TO BE "NOT IN CONFLICT" WITH U.S. POLICY. RFE DOES HAVE GUIDELINES, HOWEVER, AND WE CONFIDENTIAL

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WOULD BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS ANY INSTANCES IN WHICH GOR BELIEVES RFE HAS VIOLATED THEM. ON MFN, JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT WAS PASSED IN RESPONSE TO U.S. CONCERN OVER SITUATION IN SOVIET UNION, SO CONSEQUENTLY ANY MODIFICATION WILL REQUIRE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN U.S.-USSR RELATIONSHIP. ARMITAGE SKETCHED SEVERAL SCENARIOS IN WHICH REPEAL OR MODIFICATION MIGHT TAKE PLACE.

9. GLIGA THANKED ARMITAGE FOR HIS PRESENTATION AND AGREED TO CONSIDER HIS REMARKS. ARMITAGE ENDED BY REEMPHASIZING THE U.S. VIEW THAT THE RIGHT OF CRITICISM IS NOT AN ILLEGAL ACTIVITY, AND THAT HE HOPED THAT HIS REMARKS WOULD BE RECEIVED WITHIN THE POSITIVE CONTEXT IN WHICH THEY WERE INTENDED.

10. MEMCON FOLLOWS. CONVERSATION WITH STEFAN ANDREI BEING REPORTED SEPTEL.
BARNES

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Message Attributes

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